



TO:



Main Street Musing

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTH WINDSOR



June 2020

Dear Members and Friends,

Much of what we do these days during this COVID-19 pandemic requires us to be careful about keeping others and ourselves safe. Being so vigilant all the time is tiring, for sure. Even the simplest tasks become multi-layered.

Do we have our masks with us before we go out; gloves? sanitizer? Should we go out? Wiping off groceries - UGH! No summer camp - bummer. Swim in a pool.... think twice. Let's go see Grandma and Grandpa...NOT. It can all become quite exhausting and discouraging.

Disappointing? Yes. Frustrating? Yes. Hard? Yes. But we can 'do' disappointing, frustrating and hard in order to prevent death. If it means taking precautions for a prolonged length of time, we can do it. It is not our prerogative to say, "I don't have to do this" or, "I want this and I'm having it because I can."

Though it is tempting to disregard the safety guidelines and we are not perfect, it is essential that we do our utmost to not place inconsequential self-interest before the common good - that is not ok. I believe Dr. Anthony Fauci addressed this by encouraging folks that it is better to over-react, than under-react.

In order to get past this, we must continue to face it head-on with God's help and using our brains. One recent comment I heard somewhere in the news suggested that we need to face this as our forebears have faced many other times of trials. Winston Churchill stated something like this: "And if you're going through hell, keep going."

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Pastor's Letter..... 1-3
- Historian's Column4
- Missions Update.....5
- Church Committee5
- Church Family News.6
- Deadlines & Details...7

SAVE THE DATE

Church Committee Meeting via Zoom: June 9th at 1pm!

Though everyone's hell is different, from lying in a hospital ICU on a ventilator, possibly dying, having a loved one die, being in recovery from the virus oneself, or providing that front-line care, to being jobless and being evicted because you can't pay the rent, everyone's hell is different.

However, we already know things are different this year. It will not be a typical summer, as hard as we may try to make it. There's no getting around it. But we must not let our guard down just yet. The risk of disregarding "Stay Home, Stay Safe" and all accompanying guidelines from our scientists brings with it a price we do not want to pay - illness and possible loss of life.

That said, please see below the announcement of the decision by your Ad Hoc Pandemic Team as it relates to resuming in-house worship in January 2021. Please digest it with grace and gratitude for how fortunate we have been at First Congregational. We have a great team dedicated to keeping you all safe.

Wednesday May 20, 2020

"But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." - Jeremiah 29:7

Hello All,

After careful consideration of recommended and suggested guidelines by the SNEUCC and others, the Ad Hoc Pandemic Team has made the decision to continue suspending use of the church buildings (Main Building and Wolcott Building) through December 31, 2020 for any gathered group that currently utilizes church space (UCW, Xmas Fair, Historian Archive/Photo Team, CE, and Sewin4Servicemen), and, of course, includes in-person worship services.

This is a holistic, moral, ethical and historic decision based on the common good of all and many other factors. We realize this comes with some disappointment, not least of all our own.

All church activities, including on-line worship via zoom, Chapel Chat, and other offerings will continue as scheduled.

Thank you in advance for your prayerful cooperation, understanding and patience as we care for each other and our neighbors during this uncertain time.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the next newsletter is **Monday, June 15th** for distribution the last week in June.

Let's get everyone caught up on what is happening in the church.



How do you want to receive the Newsletter?

If you would like to receive the *Main Street Musings* via email, please email the church office at firstchurchsw@gmail.com.

This will greatly help in production and mailing costs. Thank you! As a bonus, you will see the graphics in color.

Seeking Email Addresses

The Church Office wants to ensure that we have the most up to date and preferred email addresses on file for our members and friends. The current virus situation has us mostly relying on email to communicate. If you haven't been receiving updates from the church via email, please consider sending the office an email request to be added to the distribution list: firstchurchsw@gmail.com. Please also let us know if we may add you to the electronic distribution list to receive an email version of this newsletter.

Remote Office Hours

Hours will be Tuesday – Friday 9am – 2pm, unless otherwise noted.

Staff:

Minister: the Rev. Nina Barlow Schmid

Moderator: Terry Belknap

Organist: Kamilla Mammedova

Administrative Assistant: Carrie Morse

Sexton: Sandy Jarvis



Please check out Rev. Nina's interview with the Journal Inquirer that was published in the Saturday/Sunday, May 23-24 edition:

https://www.journalinquirer.com/living/saturday_qas/conversation-with-the-rev-nina-barlow-schmid/article_ac5817de-9ba0-11ea-bcc2-8fa3e1676af6.html

Church Family News

Sean Connelly	06/02	Eric Horsfield	06/24
Julie Reynolds	06/05	Chevy Ricketts	06/25
James Burnham	06/09	Michael Stearns	06/25
Tyler Machowski	06/09	George Cox	06/29
Eden Dalpe	06/10	Bob Reynolds	06/29
Nathan Zaugg	06/12	Steve Weismantel	06/30
Jonathan Starr	06/14	Tyler Clapp	06/30
Jonathan Dalpe	06/18	Colby Senatro	06/30
Lauren Cummings	06/20		



Lee & Rachel Anderson	06/14
Marty & Lisa Zaugg	06/18
David & Chenoa Anderson	06/19
Art & Lee Dunham	06/20
Michael & Ruth Bombara	06/23
Douglas & Heather Woble	06/23
Mark & Liz Samsel	06/24



Joyce Coon	Shirley Lawton
Bev Nielsen	Vibert Deane
Doris Burgdorf	Avis Pelletier
Jim Jackson	Beverly Devren Stewart
Dave Chapman	Melody Treadwell
Merle & Leilani Dinse	Michael Bombara



Send them a note today!

Bev Nielsen
58 Pleasant Valley Road
South Windsor, CT 06074

Joyce Coon
Arbors at Hopbrook
403 W Center Street; Apt. 316
Manchester, CT 06040

And remember, we are not alone. The One, True God walks with us. This too shall pass.

We look forward with great enthusiasm to 'seeing' you at all our virtual church functions. Should you have any questions, please email or call the church office at firstchurchsw@gmail.com; 860-528-7992. Calls continue to be monitored by our Administrative Assistant Carrie Morse who is working remotely. May you all remain healthy and well.

Rev. Nina and the Ad Hoc Pandemic Team

Terry Belknap, Moderator
Carroll Stearns, Trustee Chair
Lauren Horsfield, Deacon Chair
Lee Anderson, Treasurer
Jean Jackson, Clerk and Recording Secretary

Our church community remains very dear to all of us. The goal is to preserve us. Thank you for walking with us on this task and supporting the efforts to be safe.

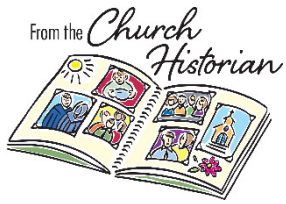
One silver-lining of this pandemic is that many of us are being led to find meaning in new ways and new things. Our worship and other activities have been on-line since March. Many of us who said "Never" are on board. We miss each other and are finding community in new ways. Good for us!

Some of what we thought was so important in our daily lives - just isn't. That's not to say we shouldn't enjoy ourselves, but the moment to re-assess the priorities in our lives is here. Let us take it and savor every minute of this trying, yet powerfully substantive time.

Even though things are 'opening up' in the public square, we must still proceed with extra caution, a caution which admittedly is getting old, especially as we are heading into those "lazy, hazy days of summer," when we traditionally let our spiritual and emotional hair down.

Please lean into your summer mode with respect for the health of others and yourselves. This is, after all, who we are as followers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Nina



Historian's Column

Mary Crittenden

We are in a new time of change. We are on the verge of the easing out of sheltering. We are in the first phase of a slow planned restart of a life like what we knew before the

Coronavirus invaded our society. The world-

wide spread of the COVID-19 changed much in how we have done business; protected our citizens, especially the frail. The stay at home orders affected businesses, schools, organizations including houses of worship, all aspects of our lives and our availability to be physically close to family and friends. Experiences have included on-line schooling, virtual worship services, shopping online, special hours for the elderly and frail to go to grocery stores, curbside pickup from the stores and restaurants that are open, to try to keep the customer safe.

People have experienced loneliness; grief over loss of freedom; shortages at groceries stores; worry and fears. These have been intensified by the constant broadcasting of reports, predictions and listing of numbers. We don't know what the lasting changes in society will be, but on our way to it, the people in our government, ministers and church leadership, school boards and many others are making some hard decisions. They are considering very complex issues.

Most of us are sheltering in our homes away from the debates about all aspects of our society. Some very complex decisions will need to be made regarding having a worship service: Can we do communion in any form? Can the choir sing (they stand too close together)? Can the congregation even consider singing since doing so spreads the virus farther and it is breathed in more deeply? How do we provide bulletins for the service and keep distancing in place? How do we dismiss the gathered congregation safely? Many in our congregation are elderly or frail. Based on multiple resources, including SNEUCC, the Ad Hoc Pandemic Team has made the decision to wait until January 2021 before holding in-person worship or Church School in our buildings. We shall surely celebrate when we can once again gather in-person.

This moment in our history will become just a small part of our church's story.



Missions Update

Our Missions Committee continues their hard work and outreach during these difficult times. Checks for \$250 each were recently sent to the South Windsor Food Bank, MACC, Cornerstone and Foodshare. A check for \$100 was sent to the UCC RIP Medical Debt Donation program which will bring \$10,000 of medical debt relief to people in the greater Springfield/Hartford/Providence area. We have also partnered with Wapping Community Church to collect much needed toiletry items for the South Windsor Food Bank. These mission donations are hugely appreciated and needed during this pandemic.

Church Committee

Jean Jackson, Church Clerk

Church Committee hasn't met formally as a group since March, when the COVID-19 pandemic struck. Treasurer Lee Anderson and Investment Guru Jim Belknap have continued to email the group with financial updates. The following would have been presented at April's meeting.

- Treasurer's report for March - Expenses were \$24,511.16. Income was \$35,725.33. Cash on hand is \$14,127.80. Surplus for March is \$11,214.17; surplus for the year-to-date is \$185.30. Lee noted that income was high due to a planned quarterly withdrawal in addition to \$12,000 in principal taken from the brokerage account to cover expenses.
- Investments - March saw the account decrease approximately \$162,000.00. \$34,397.00 was taken out to cover expenses, resulting in a total decrease of \$197,228.00 for March. The end value for March is \$1,401,076.28.

The following updates would have been presented at May's meeting, which was also cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Treasurer's report for April - Expenses were \$17,866.66. Income was \$11,485.00. Cash on hand is \$7,778.36. Deficit for April is \$6,381.66; deficit for the year-to-date is \$6,164.14. Lee noted that \$8,000.00 was withdrawn the brokerage account to cover expenses.
- Investments - April saw the account increase approximately \$145,284.00. \$8,000.00 was taken out to cover expenses, resulting in a net increase of \$137,284.00 for April. The end value for April is \$1,538,359.55.
- **The next Church Committee meeting will be held via ZOOM on Tuesday, June 9, 2020 at 1:00 pm.**